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Amendments to the Drawings

The replacement sheet of drawings attached hereto as **Exhibit A** replaces Figures 1 of the original sheets of drawings. Figures 1 is now labeled as prior art.

Attachment: replacement sheet of drawings for Figure 1

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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 30, 2007. Claims 1-43 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 22, 28 and 30 have been amended to depend from independent claim 1, claims 42 and 43 have been amended to depend from independent claim 38, claims 23-27, 29 and 31-37 to clarify the claimed subject matter, and claims 6 and 15 have been amended by rewriting them in independent form. Accordingly, claims 1-43 are presented for reconsideration, with claims 1, 6, 12, 15, 38 and 39 being in independent form.

The drawings were objected to.

The replacement sheet of drawings attached hereto as **Exhibit A** replaces Figure 1 of the original sheets of drawings. Figure 1 is now labeled as prior art.

Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-29, 42 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,956,057 to Childer et al. Claims 30-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,364,472 to Hmelar et al. Claim 39 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by Yamazaki et al. (JP 59-227458). Claims 1-5, 9, 11-14, 18, 20, 38 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Yamazaki in view of the Background Art referenced in the specification of the present application and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,220,702 to Nakamura et al. Claims 21 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Yamazaki et al. in view of the Background Art referenced in the specification of the present application and further in view of Childer et al.

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Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 12, 38 and 39 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to means for containing ink in an image forming apparatus.

An ink cartridge proposed in the background art is shown in Fig. 1 of the present application. The ink cartridge of Fig. 1 includes an ink containing part 501 containing ink, a cylindrical case 502 housing the ink containing part 501, and a lid member 503 covering the front side (opening) of the cylindrical case 502. The ink containing part 501 is integrated with a holding member 504 which in turn is integrated with a sealed cylindrical ink filling opening 505 for filling the ink containing part 501 with ink and a cylindrical ink supply opening 506 for supplying ink. The holding member 504 is pushed into the cylindrical case 502 so that projections 504a of the holding member 504 engage engagement holes 502a formed on the wall surface of the cylindrical case 502. As a result, the holding member 504 is fixed and held to the cylindrical case 502. The lid member 503 is fitted into the opening of the cylindrical case 502.

However, the ink cartridge shown in Fig. 1 of the present application does not have good operability when it comes to assembly and disassembly, and refill of ink therein.

Applicant devised improved approaches for containing ink for image forming. For example, claim 1 of the present application is directed to an ink cartridge comprising a first housing including a holding part holding a holding member of an ink containing part, a second housing whose outline is analogous to an outline of said first housing, and a third housing fitted to a side of an assembly of said first and second housings from which side ink is supplied.

Childers, as understood by applicant, proposes an ink container for use in an ink jet

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printing system comprising a printhead under control of printing system electronics and an ink container receiving station for providing ink to the printhead. The ink container proposed by Childers includes a plurality of container interfacing features positioned on the ink container to engage corresponding interfacing features of the ink container receiving station.

However, since Childers is not cited against claim 1, the Office Action implicitly acknowledges that Childers does not disclose or suggest an ink cartridge comprising a first housing including a holding part holding a holding member of an ink containing part, a second housing whose outline is analogous to an outline of said first housing, and a third housing fitted to a side of an assembly of said first and second housings from which side ink is supplied, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application. Similarly, Childer does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of independent claims 12, 38 and 39 of the present application.

Likewise, Childers does not teach or suggest claims 22-29 of the present application which now depend from claim 1, nor claims 42 and 43 of the present application which now depend from claim 38.

Hmelar, as understood by applicant, proposes an ink supply container configured to be properly oriented when inserted into an ink-jet printer.

Hmelar, like Childers, does not disclose or suggest an ink cartridge comprising a first housing including a holding part holding a holding member of an ink containing part, a second housing whose outline is analogous to an outline of said first housing, and a third housing fitted to a side of an assembly of said first and second housings from which side ink is supplied, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application, and similarly does not

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disclose or suggest the subject matter of independent claims 12, 38 and 39 of the present application.

Likewise, Hmelar does not teach or suggest claims 30-37 of the present application which now depend from claim 1.

Yamazaki, as understood by applicant, proposes an ink cassette for an ink jet recording apparatus. The ink cassette proposed by Yamazaki has an integral structure that includes a cap (50) comprising an ink discharge part (51) and a cap part (52). An ink bag (40) is received in an enclosure formed by a lower part (10) and an upper part (20) which are connected at one end thereof by a hinge (30) and connected at the other end thereof by a hook pawl (21).

The Office Action equates lower enclosure part 10, upper enclosure part 20 and ink absorbent material 80 of Yamazaki to the first, second and third housings of the claimed subject matter of the present application.

However, the ink absorbent material 80 of Yamazaki is sponge material and *NOT* a housing.

Yamazaki (paragraph coupling pages 300 and 301) states that "the housing is divided vertically into two parts as described above, which are hinge-coupled with hinges of the like on one end side and coupled with hook pawls on the other end side." Yamazaki (page 301, top right) states that the ink absorbent material 80 is provided on "the entire surface except for the cap part of the ink supply needle insertion side" where hook pawls 21 are formed.

Accordingly, applicant maintains that the ink cassette proposed by Yamazaki includes only two housing and the ink absorbent material 80 does not serve as a housing.

Nakamura, as understood by applicant, proposes an ink bag for ink jet type recording

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apparatus.

None of the cited references (including the background art shown in Fig. 1 of the present application) teaches or suggests, however, an ink cartridge comprising a first housing including a holding part holding a holding member of an ink containing part, a second housing whose outline is analogous to an outline of said first housing, and *a third housing fitted to a side of an assembly of said first and second housings from which side ink is supplied*, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1 of the present application.

Independent claims 12, 38 and 39 are patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 12, 38 and 39, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

The Office Action indicates that claims 6-8 and 15-17 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this Amendment, claims 6 and 15 have been amended by rewriting them in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 7 and 8 depend from claim 6, and claims 16 and 17 depend from claim 15. Accordingly, applicant submits that claims 6-8 and 15-17 are now allowable.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper

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should be considered to be such a petition.

The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that are required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

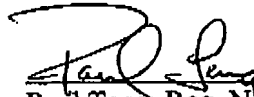

Paul Teng, Reg. No. 40,837
Attorney for Applicant
Cooper & Dunham LLP
Tel.: (212) 278-0400

EXHIBIT A

to
AMENDMENT
(Serial No. 10/537,368)